**Evidence of Impact**

# Participant Profile: Bonnie Hauser

## Librarian at Akins High School (Austin, Texas) Recounts How the Intel® Teach Program Has Changed Her Teaching

## Initial Expectations and Classroom Impact

I had no initial expectations about the training, but it really changed the dynamic in my class. One of the first things I did as a result was to go to my principal and ask for more computers in my classroom.

The next thing I did was to find a teacher who didn't like the tables she had, and I traded my desks for her tables so that I could arrange my classroom for group activities.

In order for groups to really be effective, they need work space for planning. If they are going to do a presentation, they need to be able to plot it out, and they need more space than just a couple of little desks pulled together with a crack between them.

## Learning to Change Teaching Habits

After I went through the program, one of the biggest things that I had to do was to let go of some of the structure that I'd always had in my class. What I found was, though, that because I had developed the units with the key questions in mind and with the end in mind, as well, all the steps along the way fell into place. I was able to give the groups everything they needed and have them work at their own pace.

A lot of times what I see teachers do is use technology just to have students type their paper or create a Microsoft PowerPoint* presentation. But after I went through the program, I was able to see that maybe I have only one computer in my classroom, but I can use it in better ways than I've been using it. It helped me to see the different ways I can use technology in my teaching.

## Life Skills and Technology Empowerment

In fact, some of the best things I got from the program were real-life skills that can be used somewhere other than just in the "shop." That's always a plus! Because of that, I'm able to show the kids how what they're learning applies to what they're going to do in real life. This training that I went to wasn't just related to how to teach something.

It also got me over my fear of using technology. Having gone through the program, I wasn't afraid to use technology and wasn't afraid to let my kids use the technology. I could see that I wasn't going to break it, so they probably wouldn't either.

It was interesting, too, because at the beginning of the year, I just had my kids work in groups to create a presentation related to different themes in a novel we were studying at the time. That took a long time, and it was very slow. I was showing them the basics of Microsoft PowerPoint* as I had learned them. By the end of the year, when we were in our final unit, however, they were again doing a presentation. They hadn't done one in a while, but they were showing me how to change the background color and how to change all these little settings that I didn't even know. You give technology to the kids, and they just run with it.

## Technology as Motivation

I had one student, who had never done any work all year, who created the best presentation. The goal was to create an idea for a game and then sell it to a prospective manufacturer. This student just went all out working on his presentation. We invited the principal to come in and see the presentations and he [the student] beamed! She [the principal] saw the student in the hall later and said something to him, and it was really neat to see somebody who wasn't that interested in class light up and take it in.

That really turned it around. Once he started using technology in class, he got interested in it, and he didn't just do the technology aspect. He wasn't just the kid in the group who wanted to deal with the technology, but not read the story and not do any of the other stuff. He did everything for the assignment, even though it was just that one little piece that he was really interested in.

## Critical Thinking

One of the things that the students need to be able to do to be successful in today's world is to be able to evaluate—not just use the technology, but evaluate the value of what they're finding through the technology. If they're going to do research with the Internet, then they need to be able to understand the difference between a good source and one that's not credible. They also need to be able to read text on a computer screen. If you go into any businesses today, everything's coming up on a computer screen now. They need to be able to use a variety of programs, not just one or two programs. They need to be flexible and adaptable to changes in the programming.

The Intel program did teach teachers how to teach students to use a variety of programs. It was about the Microsoft Office* suite, but it was still a variety of things. Those skills do tend to translate. It's like learning a second language after you've learned a first one. It's a little bit easier because you have something to relate it to.

## Collaborative Learning and Essential Questioning

One of the things about this program that makes it unique is the way it focuses on collaborative learning. I think that's why my students were able to progress so much further than the skills that I had given them; they learned from each other. One person would find something out and show it to everybody else, which made everybody else want to go out and find out something that they could share. They became more driven to find out their own information that way.

I think the potential is always there when we agree to work together, but I think that the essential question structure is so powerful that I think it helps to change the way they think. I think that that does have a big effect on the group dynamic. They're not just here to figure out how to work this, because typically, if you give group work, it's "I'll do one through five, you do six through ten, and we'll get it done," and we call that group work. They had to search out information on their own and bring it together, and actually share with each other a little bit more than just accomplishing a simple task. It wasn't a simple task, and I think, maybe, that has a lot to do with why the groups work together so much better.

Through the Intel® Teach Program, I learned to design units that began with Essential Questions that were very thought-provoking, and, because of that, my students then had to start to think a little differently about the way they approached a task. They couldn't just divvy up the work. They really had to work and think together on the work they had to complete.